

Soul of a nation

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What Bangsa Malaysia means to MCA president

RAWANG: The term Bangsa Malaysia merely reflects the spirit of a Malaysian and it should be looked at from a broad perspective, MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting said.

"To us, Bangsa Malaysia means the Rakyat Malaysia spirit, which already exists rather than the formation of a new race. When you are a Malaysian citizen you enjoy all the rights in the Constitution,

which were already agreed upon by our forefathers.

"We promote unity in diversity. No race will be deprived of its original identity, culture, religion, language and traditional practices. This is the key to the success of the multi-racial Malaysian society. This is our strength," he said.

Malaysians, Ong said, should stick to the spirit of the Constitution as well as the principles of the Rukun Negara and

continue to respect each other.

He said the MCA believed in promoting the spirit of Rakyat Malaysia, adding that "it is not by forcing or changing any character of any race, and yet we maintain a very strong Malaysian spirit and outlook."

The Rakyat Malaysia concept promoted by the MCA emphasises that the Rakyat Malaysia is already naturally imbued in every Malaysian.

The party upholds that Ma-

laysians have the freedom to study their mother tongue and maintain their culture and practices yet live together in harmony by upholding the spirit of Rakyat Malaysia and the principles of the Rukun Negara.

Ong was commenting on a statement by Johor Umno chief Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman, who had warned of the dire consequences of advocating a Bangsa Malaysia.